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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, whose mercies never fail, we come into Your presence with thanksgiving and praise. We are thankful that Your mercy is everlasting and Your truth endures to all generations. We praise You that we are Your people and the sheep of Your pasture.

Today, enable the Members of this body to experience Your presence and to receive Your wisdom. May they receive these blessings, aware of Your counsel that, "to whom much is given, much is required." Bless us and all the people of the world today and every day.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 21, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will be in morning business for 1 hour with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2832, the GSP bill and the vehicle for trade adjustment assistance.

At approximately 12:30 p.m. there will be two rollcall votes in relation to the Hatch amendment regarding the effective date of trade adjustment assistance and the McCain amendment regarding a 2-year extension of that program.

Additional rollcall votes are expected during today's session.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, the time equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes

each. The majority will control the first half and the Republicans will control the second half.

The Senator from Illinois.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this morning we learned that the Republican leaders of the House of Representatives and the Senate have done something which may be unprecedented. We are searching for some example in the past when this has occurred, but we have learned today that the Republican leaders of both the House and the Senate have sent a letter to Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke ahead of the central bank's 2-day meeting that begins today. That letter to Chairman Bernanke from the Republican congressional leaders instructs him as to what they should try to achieve during their 2-day meeting.

A former Commissioner of the Federal Reserve said this is outrageous; that an independent agency such as the Federal Reserve, which is operated with independence of political impact and political pressure over the years, would now be receiving direct political communications from the Republican leaders.

What is the message from the Republican leaders to the Federal Reserve? The message is, don't lower interest rates. I don't know if Senator McCONNELL, Senator KYL, Speaker BOEHNER, or Congressman CANTOR have been home lately. But if they have been home and met with local businesses, small businesses, they will have learned very quickly that it is very difficult for them to borrow money to sustain and expand their businesses and to hire more people.

As we have a monetary policy which allows expansion of these businesses and expansion of jobs across America, we have an opportunity to try to put this recession behind us. So what is the message of the Republican leaders to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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